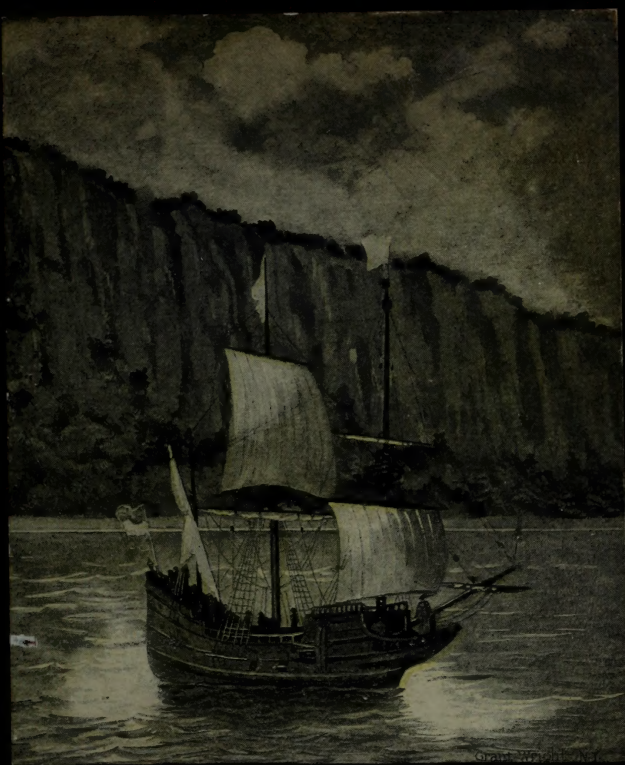




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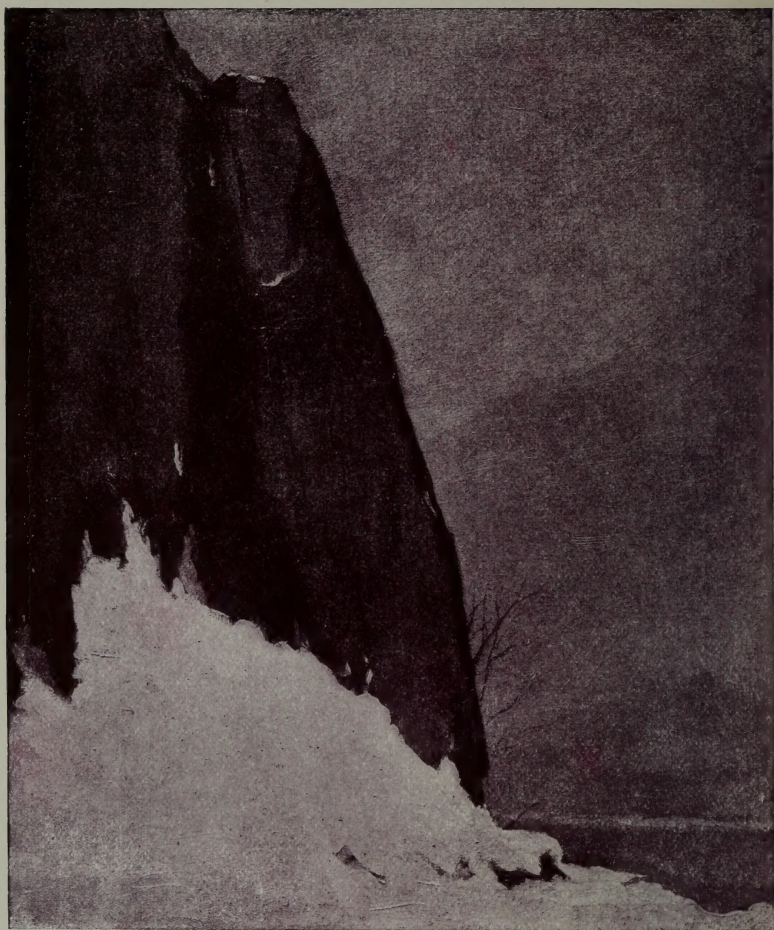


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"THE PALISADES"

FROM A PAINTING BY VAN DEARING PERRINE, THE PAINTER OF THE  
PALISADES, OWNED BY THE WHITE HOUSE

"Amid thy forest solitudes one climbs  
O'er crags, that proudly tower above the deep,  
And knows that sense of danger which sublimizes  
The breathless moment, when his daring step  
Is on the verge of the cliff, and he can hear  
The low dash of the wave with startled ear."

—Fitz-Greene Halleck.



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# THE PALISADES

OF

# THE HUDSON

THEIR FORMATION, TRADITION,  
ROMANCE, HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS,  
NATURAL WONDERS AND PRESERVATION

BY

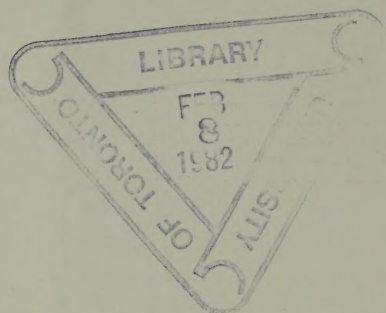
ARTHUR C. MACK



PUBLISHED BY  
**THE PALISADE PRESS**  
EDGEWATER, NEW JERSEY

1909

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Most of the photographs and initials, not credited specifically, were made by John P. Fritts.





## THE PALISADES OF THE HUDSON

"I see the beetling Palisades  
Whose wrinkled brows forever  
In calms, in storms, in lights and shades  
Keep watch along the river.

"Such watch, of old, the Magi kept  
Along the sad Euphrates;  
Our eyeless ones have never slept  
And this their solemn fate is."—*Stoddard*.



O those who have not explored the long ridge of towering basalt that rims the northeastern edge of New Jersey, and become in tune with the spirit of its huge gray rocks, the Palisades of the Hudson remain a closed book. Travelers by the railway on the opposite shore, or by the river steamers, following the main channel, see only a nearly perpendicular wall, fringed with vegetation at its base and top. To them and to writers whose viewpoint is similar to theirs, "the great chip rocks," as the Dutch pioneers named them, are little more than natural curiosities of monotonous formation. A closer intimacy with the unspoiled portion of the ridge extending from Edgewater to Piermont unfolds unexpected charms.

Let him who would discover the wonders and beauties of these ancient cliffs paddle close to their winding base, landing here and there in the shady glades that tempt the river wanderer at frequent intervals. Near one of the cool and crystal springs that gush from crevices in the rocks, the explorer's tent should be pitched. There are a few points where the dizzy heights may be ascended, and a ramble through the wild woodland that surmounts the cliffs and a sight of the picturesque near and distant views will richly reward the climber.

As the edge of the precipice is reached, instead of a flat-faced wall the Palisades will be found in reality to consist of a



A Restful Retreat in the Wonderful Palisades Region.

series of bold and majestic headlands, diversified by innumerable rocky battlements, often separated by tiny valleys down which dash silvery cascades. Instead of the apparently even fringe of verdure surmounting the heights, a wild and pristine forest will be found which nature has richly stocked with an endless variety of tree, shrub and flower. Here will the explorers who can read them find graven upon the stones in spite of the ravages of time, records of the earth's creation full of significance and interest. Here, too, will he who cherishes Revolutionary associations be able to visit localities made famous by the armies of Washington and Cornwallis.

Standing between the Hudson and the broad sweep of lowlands now known as the Hackensack Valley, the Palisades Ridge proper extends almost due north and south (from Bergen Point, New Jersey, to Piermont, New York), for a distance of thirty miles. It varies in width from two miles to less than a mile, the average being one and one-half miles. Its altitude varies from a maximum of 550 feet near the northern end to the minimum of but a few feet at sea level at the southern termination, the mean elevation over most of the ridge being 269 feet. Its eastern face is abrupt, either vertical or slanting back slightly; its western face much less steep, usually forming a gradual slope down to a broad and fertile valley.



## THE STORY OF THE ROCKS



FROM geological standpoints this entire formation is rich in meaning. Records of great processes in the formation of the earth's crust can be clearly traced by even the tyro in geology. The main body of the ridge consists of igneous rock of trappean variety, which was forced up in a semi-molten state, through a long fissure in the earth's crust during what geologists term the Jurassic Period. This process, which scientists calculate to have occurred upwards of 30,000,000 years ago, although similar to that which produced the fantastic formations of the Giant's Causeway in Ireland, the Cliffs of Kawaddy in India and Fingal's Cave in Scotland, has resulted in a configuration unlike any of those wonders and not resembling closely any other in the world. There are fewer columns than are found in other formations of the same origin and there is more rugged picturesqueness.

To comprehend that vast cataclysm of nature which resulted in the upheaval of the Palisades centuries upon centuries ago, it is necessary to understand the character of the earth's crust over their area at that time. This crust consisted of a layer of triassic sandstone, enormously thick. Beneath this sandstone the volcanic forces opened a long crevice and forced

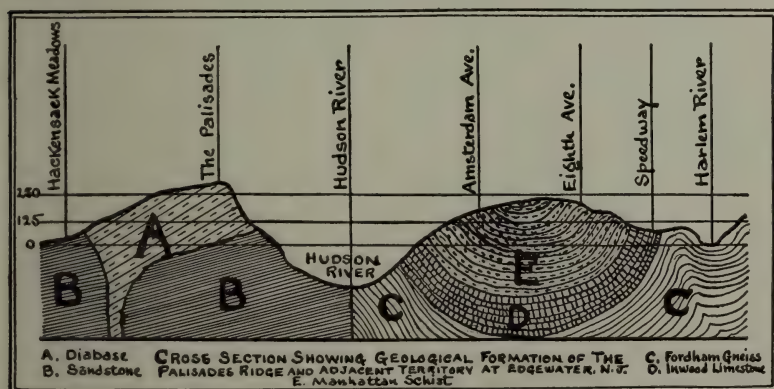


Diagram Showing Geological Formation of the Palisades Ridge.



Grooves in the Palisades Rocks, Showing Glacial Action and Movement of the Ice.

upwards the igneous formation. It must not be imagined that the ridge then assumed its present appearance. Indeed, the intrusion did not even reach the surface of the surrounding crust. For centuries it lay buried far beneath. It remained for processes working through following centuries to disclose the Palisades to outward view. When unexposed to outward air igneous rock in cooling shrinks and breaks off in sharp, perpendicular or columnar formation. This occurred along the entire Palisades Ridge. Then began the transformation which gave us the majestic cliffs of to-day. The deposits above and beside the ridge were worn away by erosion. North and south along the present bed of the Hudson occurred an immense "fault" or slip in the earth's crust. This caused the Hudson to flow in a veritable canyon, which recent borings opposite Thirty-second Street, New York, show to have been 300 feet deep. This gorge extended far out beyond Sandy Hook, the coast at that time being many miles southeastward of its present location.

The next transformation of the ridge came with the huge ice fields of the glacial period, moving across the cliffs obliquely from the northwest. When the ice melted, millions of tons of boulders and debris borne hither by the glacial movement were deposited here and there along the sides and over the top of the ridge, forming what geologists term an intra-morianic drift. This crunching over the flat rocks of the top, ground well-defined grooves in the igneous rock, marking the direction from



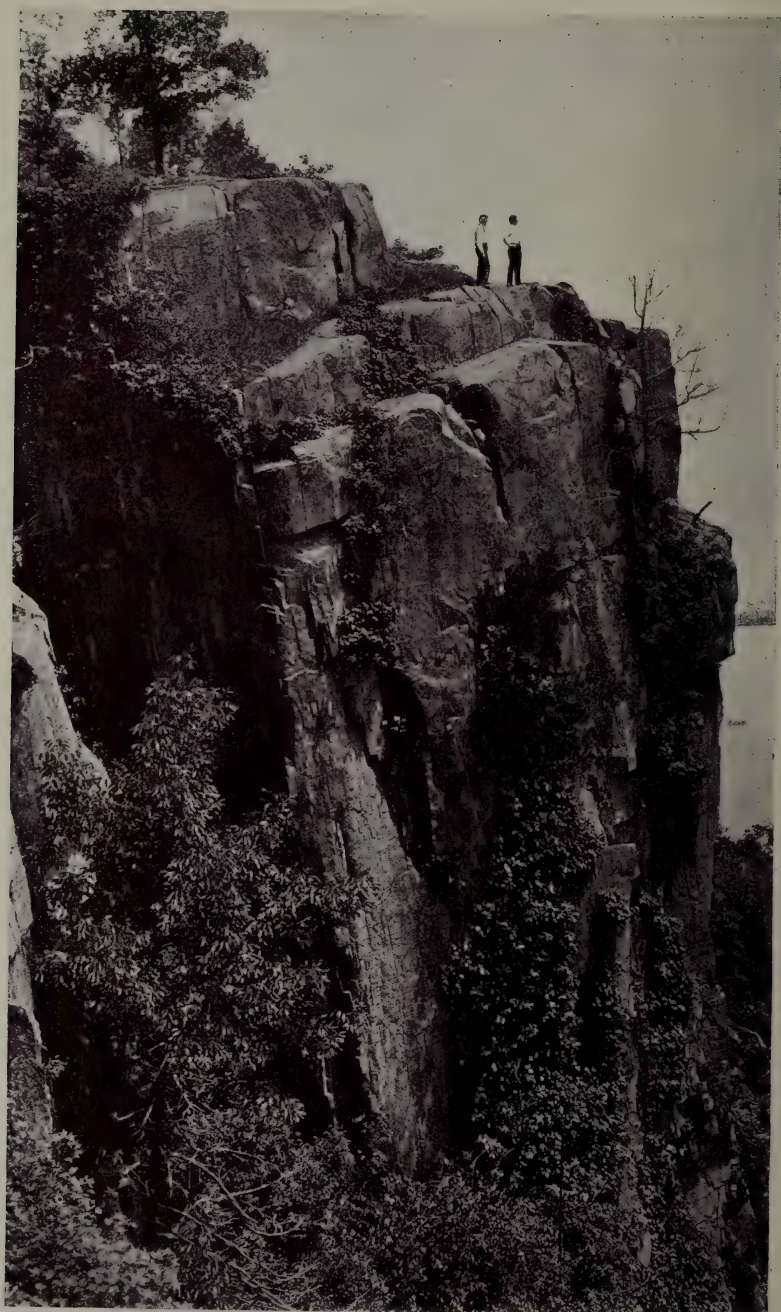
which the ice came and leaving the imprints of its passage clearly discernible even to this day. The drift resulted also in many rocky curiosities, conspicuous among them an isolated block of triassic sandstone, called Sampson's Rock, perched upon the flat trap directly east of Englewood. This huge boulder, measuring nearly twelve feet in diameter and weighing many tons, was lifted 160 feet up the western slope of the ridge by the ice (it is calculated), and finally dropped in its present resting place. Its under surface still retains the polish it received through the attrition of that movement. Many other isolated boulders stand in the woods, grim reminders of the ice age. Others passed over the cliffs, breaking off segments of the eastern crest, and filling up the ends of ravines. The deep gorge north of Hoboken and other depressions were choked in this way and extended originally much farther northward than at present.

It is known that, with the melting of the glacial masses, water surrounded the ridge to a depth of about 200 feet. The higher portion of the Palisades thus formed a long, rocky island. When this sea subsided, the Hudson began filling up its gorge with silt. This process is still going on, so that the present depth of the stream is comparatively shallow and geologists term it a "drowned river."

Until recently the theory was advanced by some authorities that the main channel of the Hudson in pre-glacial times deflected at Piermont, flowed through the Piermont valley and down the western side of the Palisades, joining the ocean by way of Newark Bay. Recent comparison of the depth of the Piermont Valley with the depth of the Hudson's original bed opposite this point completely disproves this belief.

The Palisades rock is dark gray and blue-black in color, exceedingly hard and heavy. It is remarkably impervious to the action of the elements. Under the microscope it discloses myriads of geometrical crystals, the feldspars, pyroxine, and magnetite predominating. Chemically the rock consists of 50 per cent. to 60 per cent. silica. It is estimated the ridge has a perpendicular thickness of 800 feet at Fort Lee Bluff and 1,000 feet at Alpine.





Photograph by Brown Bros.

A Palisades Promontory Standing Boldly Forth Like a Sentinel Guarding His Treasure.

## THE PALISADES IN HISTORY



THROUGHOUT their course the Palisades are rich in historical associations of either local or National interest and importance.

Of the pre-historic dwellers upon the ridge we have no trace, but of the Indians and the first white men to visit them there are clear records.

The Sanhikan, Hackensack, Raritan and Tappan Indians, belonging to the great Delaware Nation, found here excellent hunting, fishing and dwelling places. Those whose wigwams nestled under the Palisades cliffs looked southward through the blue haze that hung over the Hudson on the afternoon of September 12th, 1609, and beheld a strange vessel in the river. Slowly she drifted in upon the flood tide, a thing of wonder to the savages. Squaws and braves gazed in silent amazement upon the ship of the white man. From her lofty deck a sturdy Englishman scanned for the first time the bold rocks of the Palisades, and the green, wooded island opposite, daring to hope he had found the long-sought gateway to the Northeast Passage, wondering whether the dream of his life was about to be realized.

There was little or no wind on the river that day, and the last rays of the setting sun, sinking behind the Palisades, left the "Half-Moon" abreast of Indian Head, the highest elevation of the ridge, and almost directly opposite the present village of Hastings. Here was lowered the first anchor in the waters of the Mahican-ittuck River, as the local Indians called the Hudson. Peacefully the little ship rested that night under the shelter of Wee-awken, "rocks that look like trees"



A Jutting Headland.



as the Indians termed the Palisades. At daybreak tiny columns of blue smoke arose from the camps of the Red Men. Scores of black eyes peered riverward from behind the thick forest. Canoes made of "single hollowed trees" began to glide out from the bank.

#### TEST OF NEW WORLD HOSPITALITY.

"This morning," wrote Master Robert Juet, who kept Hudson's journal, "at our first rode in the river there came eight and twentie canoes full of men, women and children to betray us, but we saw their intent and suffered none of them to come aboard of us."

Juet was evidently mistaken in his first impression of the visitors' intentions for he goes on to add: "They brought with them oysters and beans whereof we bought some. They have great tobacco pipes of yellow copper and pots of earth to dresse their meate in."

In this connection it may be of interest to the present generation to remark here that for nearly two centuries after this historic transaction, the river flats bordering the Palisades produced the largest and most delicious oysters found near New York.

Later in that September day, the breeze freshening from the southeast, the "Half Moon" weighed anchor, and passing the northern end of the Palisades stood out across the broad waters of the Tappan Zee. Henry Hudson little imagined how soon fate would bring him again to these waters. On the 2nd day of October the "Half Moon," sailing southward after a futile search for the Northeast Passage, was attacked by the Indians near what is now Fort Washington Point. Her commander, after dispersing the warriors of "Manna-hata" with a fal-



A Palisades Brook in Winter.

con shot, sought the shelter of the great rocks on the western shore, and the protection of the Sanhikans, "deadly enemies of the Manhattans and a much superior people." All of the next day the vessel lay at anchor in the cove north of what is now Castle Point, Hoboken. From her decks Hudson pointed out a huge rock upon the Palisades of "white-green" hue, which he took for silver ore, but his ship sailed away without giving him an opportunity for discovering his error. This peculiar rock, long a point of interest, has been since obliterated by dynamite.

#### THE WHITE MAN'S ONWARD MARCH.

As the years passed on the ship of the white man became less and less a curiosity to the Indians of the Palisades. Dutch farmhouses replaced leathern tents, and settlements clustered on both sides of the ridge. Many of these original homesteads still stand, thick of wall, huge of beam, their broad gambrel roofs and quaint gables still forming picturesque monuments of those pioneer days.

Peace rewarded the early settlers for over a century save for occasional outbreaks from hostile Indians. Then came the dark days of the Revolution. The shades and glades of the Palisades became the scenes of war. From one of their rocky promontories the Commander-in-Chief of the American Army saw his force defeated in one of the most tragic hours of his career. Up their precipitous sides two of England's great generals took their armies.

The ancient town of Bergen was located on the southern end of the ridge upon the present site of Jersey City Heights. It was laid out in 1660 by Jacques Cortelyou, a surveyor of Manhattan, under direction of Governor Peter Stuyvesant. Important fortifications were maintained here during the Revolution. On October 5, 1776, the Americans abandoned the Bergen defenses and the British occupied and held them until the close of the war.

On the present site of Hoboken was an Indian village called "Hobock." At Hoboken, Castle Point projects into the river. Here the original Stevens' homestead stood, built by John Stevens, member of the Continental Congress, inventor of the screw propeller and associate of Robert Fulton. The present house, or "castle," a conspicuous landmark, was built in 1835 and is still occupied by members of the Stevens family.

## SOME TRAGEDIES OF THE PALISADES.

Just above Hoboken were the Elysian Fields, New York's great play-ground three-score years ago. Here was committed the murder of the beautiful Mary Rogers, upon which Edgar Allan Poe based his famous story "The Murder of Marie Roget."

In the year 1804 the natural beauties of Weehawken had not been despoiled by the upward march of population, and Fitz Greene Halleck, who loved to walk down to this spot from a friend's home at Fort Lee, where he was a frequent visitor, wrote:



Hamilton Monument at Weehawken.

"Weehawken! In thy mountain scenery yet  
All we adore of Nature and her wild  
And frolic hour of infancy is met."

Here upon a grassy shelf of the Palisades there met on the morning of July 11th, 1804, two of the most prominent men in American history—Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr. In this secluded retreat, a favorite dueling ground, the two men raised their pistols and here Hamilton fell mortally wounded. When the seconds picked up the stricken man they rested his head against a sandstone boulder. A monument was afterward erected on this spot, but it was almost entirely chipped away by relic hunters, and the remnants were finally removed. A railway now obliterates this historic place, but the boulder upon which the statesman's head rested, has been taken to the top of the cliff, surmounted with a bronze bust and provided with a memorial tablet. It is interesting to note that one of Hamilton's own sons fell in a duel at the same place prior to his father's death.

## THE OLD BLOCK HOUSE POINT.

At a point almost directly opposite Seventy-second Street, New York, is Block House Point, scene of one of the lighter events of the Revolution.

In 1780 the British had fortified a block house here for the protection of a large herd of cattle and other supplies. "Light



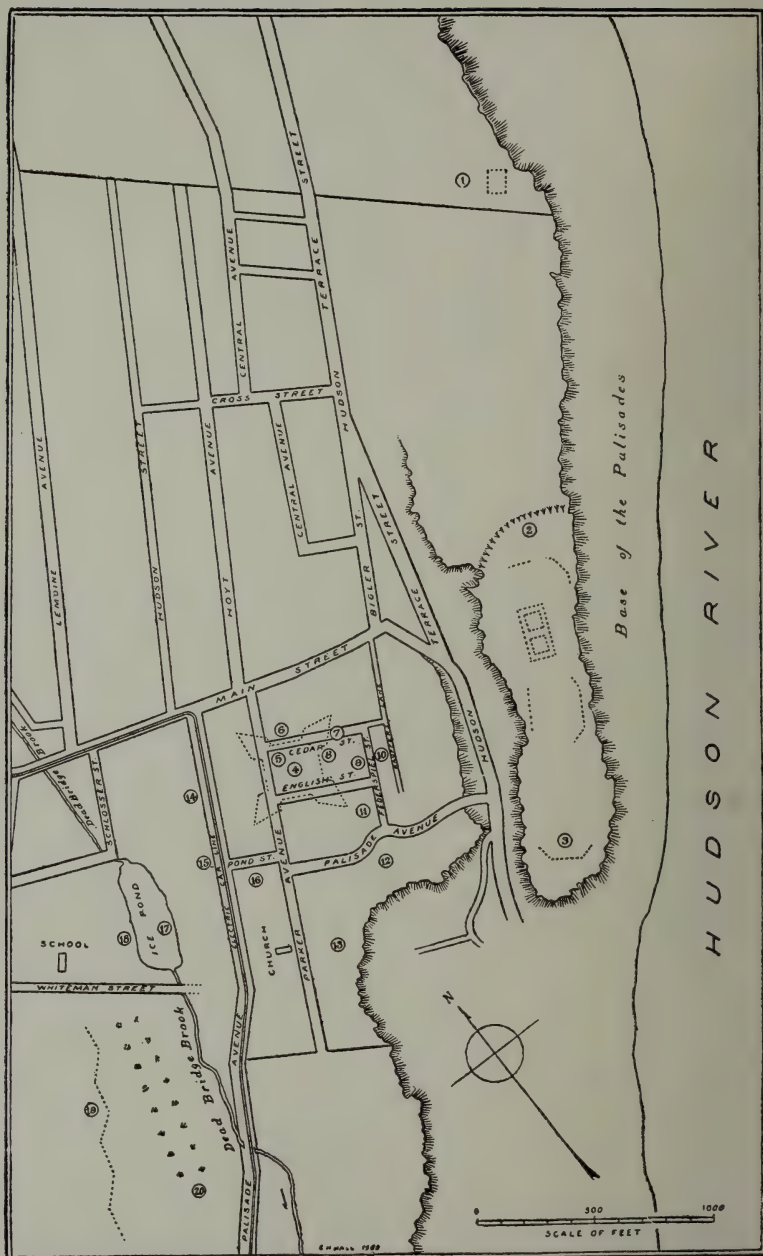
Horse" Harry Lee and General Anthony Wayne were despatched from the north to capture these necessities. Their force was insignificant in numbers, but rich in bravery. There was a sharp attack, a stiff defense, and a somewhat hasty retreat, the incident prompting André's satirical poem, "The Cow Chase," among the many cantos of which may be quoted these typical lines:

"Sublime upon his stirrups rose  
The mighty Lee behind,  
And drove the terror-smitten cows  
Like chaff before the wind."

On the river bank a short distance north of Block House Point is Bull's Ferry, called after a family named Bull. This was an important landing place during the Revolution.



A Winter's Twilight Along the Palisades.



Drawn by E. Hagaman Hall, L.H.D., for the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society.

# A LANDMARK MAP OF FORT LEE, N. J.

(See key at foot of opposite page.)

## HISTORIC OLD FORT LEE



EC come now to the Fort Lee region of the Palisades, which played an important part in the Revolution. Long before the outbreak of the great struggle Etienne Burdett, a Manhattan merchant of Huguenot parentage, built his home in a forest clearing at the foot of the gorge intersecting the Palisades below Fort Lee Bluff. The precise site of his house was directly east of the River Road, Edgewater, at a point where it turns sharply at the base of the Fort Lee Hill. Etienne's holdings included several hundred acres of the adjacent country. The Hackensack turnpike wound down the valley to a landing almost opposite the Burdett home, known as Burdett's Ferry. Periougas, the small sailing vessels then much in use, carried passengers and freight from here to Bloomingdale, on the Manhattan shore. During the Revolution Burdett's Ferry offered the only communication between Forts Washington and Lee. Troops, ammunition and supplies were brought and sent from here, Etienne Burdett's brother, Peter, having at that time inherited the place. Peter was an ardent patriot and the present T. Fletcher Burdett, a resident of Fort Lee, is proud to narrate how his great grandmother, who was Peter's wife, cooked flapjacks for General Washington and other

### KEY TO LANDMARK MAP OF FORT LEE

Reference: 1. Site of the Redoubt which commanded the sunken obstructions between Fort Lee and Fort Washington. 2. Site of the abattis enclosing the works on Bluff Point. 2 and 3. Site of works on Bluff Point. 4. Site of the main fortification of Fort Lee. 5. House here stands on site of old butcher shop. Just south of house a few years ago, there was about twenty-five feet of the embankment of the fort. 6. Here George Beucler dug up a dozen cannon balls. 7. George Hook dug up nine bullets in a cluster in June, 1901. 8. C. W. Dubois dug up bullets and bullet moulds when he excavated a cellar and well about 1898. 9. Mrs. Mary Federspiel dug up part of exploded shell. 10. Mrs. Federspiel dug up cannon ball in 1861. 11. James Sullivan dug up three cannon balls in 1885. 12. Site of army oven. 13. Washington's well. 14. Michael Tierney dug up three cannon balls in 1875. 15. Site of old pine tree which sheltered the platform for the celebration July 4, 1873. The late James F. Tracey said that four or five soldiers' graves were once pointed out to him in that vicinity. 16. Site of old pond, known as Parker's Pond Lot. The Fort Lee Monument was erected here in 1908. 17. When Hook's Ice Pond was widened in 1898, the workmen dug up along the east side quantities of lead, bullets, bullet moulds, cannon balls, a sabre, bayonets, bombshells, shoe buckles, a saddle pommel and stirrups, shovels, a pickaxe and other tools. 18. On west side of Ice Pond, there were formerly heaps of stone, the remains of the fireplaces of the soldiers' huts. Here in 1875-6, George Hook dug up bars of lead, bullet moulds, cannon balls, bayonets, etc. In the remains of a camp fire he found guns with their stocks burned. 19. Traces of breastworks visible as late as 1901. They probably extended north of Whiteman Street. 20. Heaps of stone, the remains of the fireplaces in the soldiers' huts, some still recognizable.



of the Continental officers. The original Burdett home-  
stead, a picturesque gambrel-  
roofed structure, was stand-  
ing up to a decade ago.

Burdett's Ferry has the  
distinction of having two  
miniature engagements of its  
own. Early on the morning  
of August 18, 1776, the  
British ships *Phoenix* and  
*Rose*, which had previously  
passed up the river, stood  
down stream. When abreast  
of the ferry the *Rose* was  
hulled by a shot from Gen-  
eral Mercer's Battery locat-  
ed there, firing grape shot in  
return. Again on October  
27, at seven o'clock in the  
morning, two British frigates moved up the river and anchored  
off Burdett's Ferry, apparently to cut off communication be-  
tween the forts. The barbette battery on Fort Lee Bluff opened  
fire and two 18-pounders brought down to the ferry landing  
from Fort Lee and planted opposite the ships repeatedly hulled  
and partially disabled one of the vessels (Irving). "Had the  
tide been flood one-half hour longer," wrote General Greene,  
"we should have sunk her."



A Rocky Chaos on the Summit.

#### THE DARK DAYS OF '76.

In order to appreciate the dramatic events that occurred in  
and about Fort Lee while the struggle for Independence was at  
its height, it is necessary to bear in mind the status of the oppos-  
ing forces in early November, 1776. The Colonial cause was in  
a critical condition.

Forced to retire from Long Island and Westchester, and  
driven northward from southern Manhattan Island, that portion  
of the Continental forces east of the Hudson now found itself  
on the heights between the Harlem and the Hudson, hemmed in  
on all sides by the great army of Sir William Howe. The  
troops were battered, ragged and discouraged, and discontent  
had begun to develop in their ranks.

## THE KEY TO THE HUDSON



CONGRESS had already instructed Washington to “by every art and whatever expense obstruct effectually the navigation between Fort Washington (on the east bank of the river) and Mount Constitution (on the Palisades whereon Fort Lee stood) as well to prevent the enemy’s frigates lately gone up, as to hinder them from receiving succor.” In accordance with these plans General Nathaniel Greene had fortified the two defenses that thus held the key to the Hudson Valley, Fort Washington and Fort Lee. Colonel Rufus Putnam had constructed an elaborate *chevaux-de-frise*, across the river between the forts. This obstruction consisted of two sunken sloops, two sunken brigs, two large ships mounted with heavy guns and swivels, “two hundred iron fraise of 400 weight each,” besides sundry logs and other impedimenta.

Fort Lee must be connected inseparably with its sister fortification, Fort Washington on the opposite shore. Indeed, as Greene wrote Washington, “it was of no consequence except in conjunction with Fort Washington.” Fort Lee was constructed by General Hugh Mercer and was originally called Fort Constitution, but on October 18, 1776, was rechristened in honor of General Charles Lee.

Its main works were located on the crest of a precipitous bluff of the Palisades, 250 feet above the river, on the left-hand side of the present road that ascends to the little village named in honor of the fort. Immediately below the fort is the deep gorge through which this road winds and a stream named Dead Brook. To the northeast on Fort Lee Bluff, directly overlooking the river, there were constructed outworks for the purpose of guarding the river and commanding the *chevaux-de-frise*.

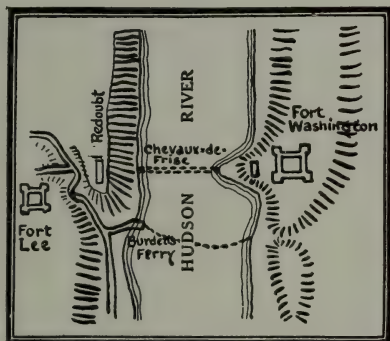
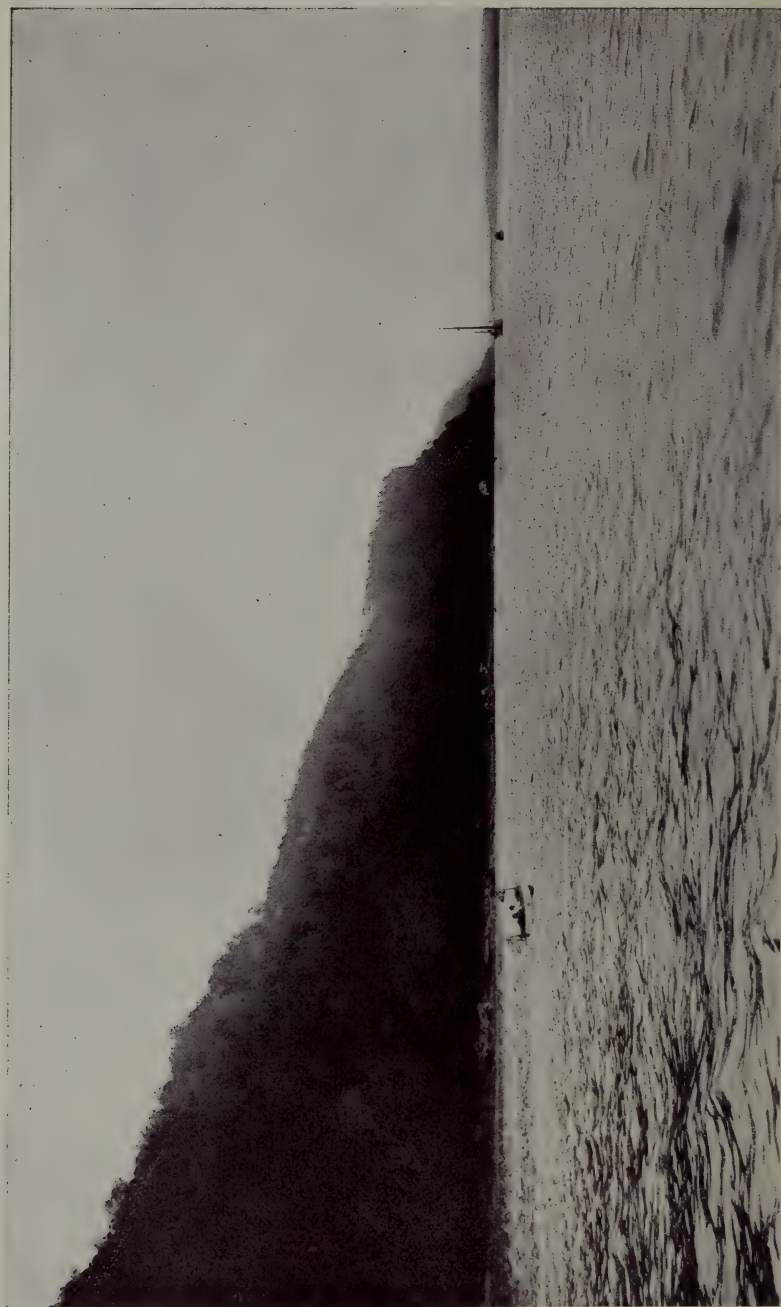


Diagram of Forts Lee and Washington.



The Serried Headlands as They Appear from Mid-Stream.



MILITARY VALUE OF FORT LEE.

The strategic value of Fort Lee lay in its ability to bombard any hostile fleet in the river beneath, and to supply reinforcements to the opposite shore. Fort Washington lay on the heights of Manhattan Island almost directly opposite, with long outworks running down to Jeffrey's Hook, as Fort Washington Point was then named.

With his keen foresight Washington saw the futility of endeavoring to hold the fortification named in his honor, writing Governor William Livingston, of New Jersey: "That they will invest Fort Washington is a matter of which there can be no doubt." The Americans holding Fort Washington were outnumbered by the enemy almost three to one. General Charles Lee had insolently disregarded the Commander's orders to bring the 7,000 men under him at North Castle to reinforce the forts. Colonel Putnam's elaborate obstruction had been proved vulnerable, for on the morning of October 9th the British men-of-war *Roebuck*, *Phoenix* and *Tartar*, with all sail set to a fresh south wind, got under way from their anchorage in the lower river, and swept through the obstructions in gallant style, notwithstanding bombardment from the two shore defenses. Later, on the night of November 14th, a fleet of the enemy's flat boats passed in spite of the obstructions, and proceeded into the Harlem River.



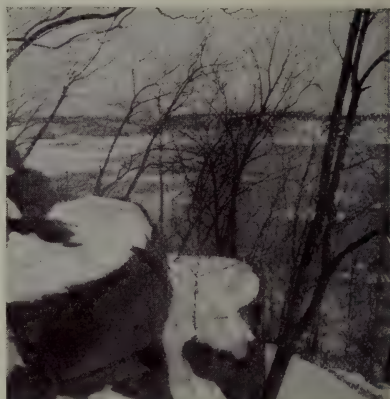
Picturesque Foreground of Dense Foliage and High Rocks.

The Commander-in-Chief, therefore, ordered General Greene to evacuate Fort Washington, and withdraw from Fort Lee. The orders were of a somewhat discretionary nature, however. Greene and Putnam were both sanguine of their ability to hold the forts successfully and decided to remain. Congress, then sitting at Fishkill, and fearful of an invasion of the Hudson Valley, further complicated matters by transmitting instructions not to evacuate the forts except in case of "direst necessity."

## WASHINGTON AT FORT LEE.

On the 13th of November Washington, anxious concerning the forts, arrived at Fort Lee from Stony Point, traveling by the road that follows the western slope of the Palisades. Here he found Greene reinforcing Fort Washington. After a brief visit the Commander left for the headquarters at Hackensack.

Stirring events now followed in rapid succession. On the 15th Colonel Robert Magaw, commanding Fort Washington, received an imperative order to surrender from General Howe. The order threatened severe measures should it be refused. In ringing terms Magaw threw down the gauntlet in his stirring message containing the memorable words, "actuated by the most glorious cause that mankind ever fought in, I am determined to hold this fort until the last extremity." At four o'clock in the afternoon of the same day Greene sent a hurried message requesting the presence of Washington at Fort Lee. The General galloped over the Hackensack turnpike and reached the fort at nine o'clock in the evening. Greene had already crossed the river. Down the gorge road Washington hurried, and, boarding a boat, was rowed across toward Jeffrey's Hook. When half-way across, as Washington himself puts it in his journal, "I met Generals Putnam and Greene, who were just returning from thence (Fort Washington) and they informed me that the troops were in high spirits and would make a good defense, and it being late at night, I returned." That night Washington slept at the Burdett house, of which we have already heard.



The Ice Floes' Silent Course.

## THE FALL OF THE FORTS.

Early on the next day, after the morning mists had cleared away, the boom of cannon and crack of musketry announced the opening of hostilities. From the lofty eminence of Fort Lee the entire scene of battle was visible. Beneath the anxious



A Wind-Swept Crag.

watchers at that point, flowed the Hudson, the foreground of a vast panorama stretching far to the north among the Westchester hills, to the blue hills of Long Island beyond the Sound and to the south as far as Staten Island.

Across on the heights of the opposite island these watchers could now clearly see the beginning of the greatest battle ever fought upon Manhattan Island; a

battle in which love, patriotism, daring and even treason, were all strangely intermixed. Brave Robert Magaw, with scarce 3,000 men, faced over 8,900 British pressing him on three sides and with the man-of-war *Pearl* threatening his riverward earth-works.

Through the woods from the north came the first column under Von Knyphausen, 3,000 strong; from the south charged two brigades under Percy together with Maxwell's forces, over 5,000 men all told; from the east moved Sterling with over 900 men in line. It was a bewildering attack for the little garrison to meet.

Nearer and nearer came the crack of the muskets. Again and again an opening was made in the defenses. Again and again it was resolutely closed. The little force of Americans fought shoulder to shoulder, as men only fight when desperately pressed. For an hour and a half Cadwallader's 800 Pennsylvanians held back 5,000 British. Among these 800 stood Corbin, a Pennsylvania gunner. Behind him crouched his wife, Margaret. A shot mortally wounded him. His wife instantly took his place at the gun and fired it steadily till a grape-shot prostrated her. She was the first woman to fight in the cause of American liberty, and the first woman to receive a pension from the Government in recognition of her services.

#### WASHINGTON VIEWS THE DISASTER.

While the din was at its height a silent and impressive scene was being enacted at Fort Lee on the opposite side of the river. Upon the crest of the Palisades stood Washington and his officers gravely watching the tide of battle. As the attack-





Rugged Sky Line and Towering Rocks Show Nature's Superb Handiwork in the Palisades. Photograph by John P. Fritts.

ing columns worked nearer and nearer to the defenders a look of anguish overspread the Commander's strong face. Taking paper and pencil he hastily wrote a message to Magaw. Washington had already seen that the defense was hopeless, but he believed that the little army might still be rescued. He implored Magaw to hold on till night when a rescuing force from Fort Lee would attempt to bring his men across the river.

Captain Gooch, of Boston, took the message from the General's hand, and dashed down to the river bank with it. Here he leaped into a boat and rowed across to Jeffrey's Hook. He landed, leaped up the rocky bank, rushed into the fort and in person handed the message to Magaw. Then the messenger ran out from the fort, reached his boat and rowed across to the western shore, which he regained in safety.

Washington's urgent instructions reached Magaw too late. He had found his position untenable before they had reached his hands. He had fought a battle against odds of three to one, but he had a still more serious handicap, William Demont, one of his own adjutants, the first traitor in the American Army, having supplied the enemy with the complete plans of Fort Washington.

In despair the Commander-in-Chief watched the last act in the tragedy being enacted before his eyes. Finally the firing ceased, and he saw the white flag flutter from the flagpole of Fort Washington. He dropped his field glass, and in the agony of his soul "wept with the tenderness of a child." But in this, the hour of grief and discouragement, Washington never lost sight of the immediate danger to the force about him. He saw that further holding of Fort Lee was hopeless, that at any hour the British might cross and capture it.

The British losses were 500, the American losses 150. The British captured 3,000 men, besides valuable stores and ammunition.

"The fall of Fort Washington," says Fiske, "was the greatest disaster of the war, and came within an ace of overwhelming the American cause in irretrievable ruin."



Along an Ancient Road.

## GENERAL GREENE'S HASTY FLIGHT.

The evacuation of Fort Lee, which now followed, was accomplished with desperate haste. "Greene took flight," says Bancroft, "leaving blankets and baggage, except what his few wagons could bear away, more than three months' provisions for 3,000 men, camp kettles on the fires, above 400 tents standing and all his cannon except two twelve-pounders." An interesting account of the evacuation was written by Thomas Paine, the celebrated author, who as aide-de-camp to Greene, was an eyewitness. He says:

"As I was with the troops at Fort Lee, and marched with them to the edge of Pennsylvania, I am well acquainted with many circumstances which those who lived at a distance knew little of. Our situation there was exceedingly cramped, the place being on a narrow neck of land, between the Hackensack



Where Grim Winter Rules in Solitary Grandeur.



and North Rivers. Our force was inconsiderable, being not one-fourth as great as Howe could bring against us. We had no army at hand to have relieved the garrison, had we shut ourselves up and stood on the defense. Our ammunition, light artillery and the best part of our stores had been removed upon the apprehension that Howe would endeavor to penetrate the Jerseys, in which case Fort Lee could be of no use to us. \* \* \* Such was our situation and condition at Fort Lee on the morning of the 20th of November, when an officer arrived with information that the enemy with 200 boats had landed seven or eight miles above. Major-General Greene, who commanded the garrison, immediately ordered them under arms, and sent an express to his Excellency, General Washington, at Hackensack, distant six miles. Our first object was to secure the bridge across the Hackensack. General Washington arrived in about three-quarters of an hour and marched at the head of his troops. \* \* \* We brought off as much baggage as the wagons could contain. The rest was lost. \* \* \* The simple object was to bring off the garrison and march them on till they could be strengthened by the Pennsylvania or Jersey militia."

The Palisades Fort was soon to fall into the hands of the British. On the evening of November 19th Lord Cornwallis crossed the Hudson from the east bank with a force of 6,000 men, including the first and second battalions of light infantry; two companies of chasseurs, two battalions of guards and the 33rd and 42nd regiments of the line. This formidable army was landed at Closter Landing, now known as Alpine. The difficult task of getting men and arms up to the crest of the Palisades over the rough and steep road was at once begun. On the following morning the British army and its gear of war had gained the crest, and after a two hours' march, it was securely ensconced within the works of Fort Lee.

Two years after Cornwallis had taken his men up the road from Closter Landing (Alpine) General Earl Grey, of Lord Howe's Army, disembarked his forces at the same point and marched across to Hackensack, where he fell upon Colonel Baylor's patriots.

The key to the Hudson was thus completely in the hands of the British, but it did not prove so valuable from a strategic point of view as had been supposed.



Photograph by John P. Fritts.

The Sloping Crest of the Palisades.



Ruins of the Old Mountain House at Englewood Cliffs.

## MARKING HISTORIC LOCALITIES



**T**HE remains of Fort Washington can still be seen, and on the 125th anniversary of the battle, October 16, 1901, a bronze tablet was placed on the site by the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society.

Until 1908 no monument or tablet marked the site of Fort Lee. On September 26 of that year, however, through the efforts of the Fort Lee Revolutionary Monument Association, the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, acting as custodians of the funds, an appropriate monument was erected. This monument is the work of Carl E. Tefft, whose design was selected in a competitive contest. The base of the monument consists of an immense boulder of Palisade rock, climbing up one side of which heroic bronze figures of two Continental soldiers are represented. The artist's and sculptor's idea is to show the soldiers scaling the crest of the Palisades.

Few traces of the defenses themselves now remain. Traces of the south bastion of the fort west of the quaint little stone Episcopal Church may still be seen, also the soldiers' ovens cut out of the rock. Almost opposite the church is the "Washington Spring," which supplied water to the troops. All traces of the redoubt on Fort Lee Bluff have now



Revolutionary Monument at Fort Lee.



disappeared, although J. Fletcher Burdett, of Fort Lee, told the writer that a few years ago, in constructing a building there, the stone wall thrown up by the Continental soldiers was clearly disclosed.

#### A TRAITOR'S NAME PERPETUATED.

It is unfortunate that the name of the Palisades fort was changed from Fort Constitution to Fort Lee. It now perpetuates the memory of one whose disloyalty and treachery to the American cause were manifested on many occasions. The career of Charles Lee was repugnant alike to the Continental and British armies. We have seen his supreme disregard of Washington's orders. After tardily bringing his forces across the Hudson, he was captured by the British and taken to New York for confinement. He immediately set about to purchase his liberty by treachery. In prison he elaborated a plan to his captors for conquering the American Army. But his perfidy was not well received by Sir William Howe. Instructions were received from the King to send Lee to England for trial. Washington held six Hessian officers as hostages for Lee's safety, however, and Howe fearing to send his prisoner home, in May, 1778, exchanged him for Major General Prescott. Lee was reappointed to Second in Command, but further treachery at Monmouth and subsequent disloyalty led to his permanent dismissal from the army. His later days were given to venomous attacks upon Washington. Finally, despised by all decent men, he died in a public house at Philadelphia, his remains being interred in Christ Church Cemetery.

A few miles above Fort Lee Bluff a white edifice surmounts the cliffs. This is St. Michael's Villa, a prominent Roman Catholic Convent. Just beyond this point are the remains of the old Englewood pier, long since disused. North of the pier Englewood Creek winds through a narrow meadow of salt grass to the base of the Palisades. To the north of St. Michael's are the vine-covered ruins of the Palisades Moun-



Old Undercliff Settlement.

tain House, burned in 1884. Opposite here, on the western slope of the Palisades, lies the city of Englewood. The little settlement from which the present city had its origin was called Liberty Pole. During the Revolution it stood in the thick of military activities.

#### A PICTURESQUE HAMLET.

A mile north of the old Englewood pier a picturesque hamlet of scarce half a dozen houses nestles under the brow of the great rocks. This is known as Undercliff Settlement.

For generations, dating back to Revolutionary days, members of the Van Wagoner family have dwelt here. In two of the houses still live venerable members of this family. Back of the settlement from a tangled undergrowth rise the headstones of an ancient burying ground. Here lie the remains of the Van Wagoners, all the gravestones bearing dates at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Easily distinguishable from the river by its two long, white houses is Huyler's Landing, a short distance north of this hamlet. Its former name was Lower Closter Landing. The two houses, with a tiny cottage almost hidden behind the trees, are of



Old Burying Ground at Undercliff Settlement.



The Cornwallis Headquarters at Alpine. This House, Which Is Over 150 Years Old, Is Being Carefully Preserved by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission.

great age. An old road, now dis-used, winds down from the cliffs. Decades ago Huyler's Landing was a shipping point for the back country.

Directly opposite the city of Yonkers is Alpine Landing, which in Revolutionary days was called Cluster Landing. We have already seen its historical importance as the point at which Lord Cornwallis, and later, General Earl Grey, landed their respective forces. Among all the ancient houses of the Palisades still preserved none is more interesting than one which stands here. It was built over 150 years ago of Palisade stone and timber rough hewn from the Palisades forest. In this house Lord Cornwallis made his headquarters. Just to the south is the beginning of the old road up which the British armies made their laborious ways. Its remains may be traced clearly through the woods. Until a few years ago an old brick grist mill was still standing at the landing. Here the farmers of the western valley were wont to bring their grain and obtain provisions brought hither by the river packets. Almost in front of the Cornwallis house rests a gigantic boulder which came crashing down the face of the Palisades only a decade ago. It narrowly missed striking and annihilating the old structure.

From Alpine Landing to Sneden's Landing, a distance of five miles, the Palisades assume their most imposing formation. Opposite Hastings the cliffs rise almost perpendicularly from the water, presenting a sheer face of rock 550 feet in height. This is the highest portion of the ridge.



Remains of Old Military Road  
at Alpine.





Revolutionary Pistol Found in Old Block House at Sneden's Landing.

## STORY OF SNEDEN'S LANDING



SNEDEN'S LANDING is rich in its historical associations. In this quaint little settlement centered some of the most spirited minor events of the Revolution. Directly in front of it, on the noble river whose waves wash its ancient dock, was stationed the British fleet during the period from 1776 to 1783; and it was here that, by

direct order of Parliament, the American flag was first saluted by the English navy.

During the Revolution Sneden's Landing was known simply as "Dobb's Ferry on the west side of the Hudson." The old house at the landing, where lived the intrepid ferry mistress, "Mollie" Sneden, is a landmark today for patriotic Americans to visit and enjoy. In Revolutionary days it was known far and wide as "Sneeding's old house at the Fferry." As far back as the year 1719, according to historical records, it was known as "Corbet's old house," and it was here that James Alexander took observations for the establishment of the point where the 41st degree of longitude crosses the Hudson River, marking the boundary line between New York and New Jersey.

On the sharply rising ground above the landing are the ruins of the old redoubts. Here were posted 500 Continental troops under Major John



At Old Huyler's Landing.



Sneden's Landing Looking South. Remains of 1776 Redoubts in Right Foreground. Old Corbet House at Foot of Hill.



Sneden's Landing Looking North. Dobbs Ferry Directly Opposite. In the Hudson River Between These Two Points the American Flag Was First Saluted by the English Navy.

Photographs by W. S. Gilman.



Photograph by W. S. Gillman.

Grave of Mollie Sneden at Palisades, N. Y.

Clark, immediately after the battle of White Plains, in November, 1776. The American commanders believed that it was Lord Howe's intention to invade the state of New Jersey by way of Sneden's Landing and Major Clark was ordered to dispute the British general's passage. The Continental officer was not compelled to fight the British at Sneden's Landing, however, as the invading army under Lord Cornwallis crossed over at Alpine, five miles below.

There are many other points of historical interest at Sneden's Landing. Nearby, on the Closter Road, stands the Nagle, or Naugle, homestead built about 1710, where in Revolutionary days lived John D. Nagle, "the honest miller." The old Nagle grist mill was a landmark for many years, but was finally torn down. After the execution of the British spy, Major André, at Tappan, a few miles away, the unfortunate officer's effects were brought to the Nagle house.

On the hill above the redoubts stood the old Block House built in 1776, a conspicuous mark for the British ships. The tops of two large cedar trees, which stood near the Block House, were blown off under the bombardment of the British frigate *Asia* in 1776. Ruins of the old defense may be still seen in the woods surrounding its site. In these ruins more than a century ago was found an old Revolutionary pistol, now in possession of the Mann family. Between the Block House and the redoubt is located the Washington Spring, where, tradition has it, Major Clark and



A Glimpse of the Italian Garden on the Lawrence Estate.





Sneden's Landing played its part in the mournful Revolutionary episode of 1778 when Colonel George Baylor and more than a hundred of his troops were slaughtered while asleep by the British General Grey at Paramus, a few miles west. Coincident with Grey's attack upon the defenseless Continentals Lieutenant Colonel Campbell crossed to Sneden's Landing and moved west to surprise General Wayne at Tappan. But the wily American officer had been warned and with his force, inferior in numbers only, had retreated northward to safety.

It is said that Lady Martha Washington, in journeying to join her husband at Cambridge, in the autumn of 1775, crossed the ferry at Sneden's Landing.

Just south of the landing, upon a plateau, is "Cliffside," the magnificent estate of Mrs. Lydia G. Lawrence. Of all the imposing homes of the Hudson Valley few command a grander view than this, overlooking the broad expanse of the Tappan Zee, and the lower river. A woodland path leads southward from the house to a pergola standing on the river's edge, modeled after a similar structure at Amalfi, Italy. Behind this pergola a cascade falls down the perpendicular side of the Palisades into a beautiful grotto with pools, fountains and statuary. The owner of "Cliffside" has recently given a large and valuable tract of her estate to the Palisades Interstate Park Commission.

In the old days Sneden's Landing was an important ship-building point, many vessels being constructed here. Only twenty-five years after the launching of Fulton's *Clermont*, the steam ferryboat *Union* was built and put in operation at the landing. The only ferry at present is a motor boat accommodating foot passengers only.

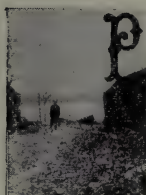


Night on the Palisades.

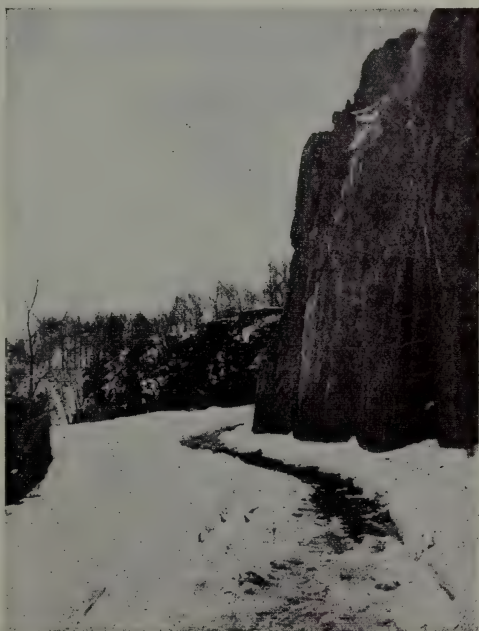
Photograph by John P. Fritts.



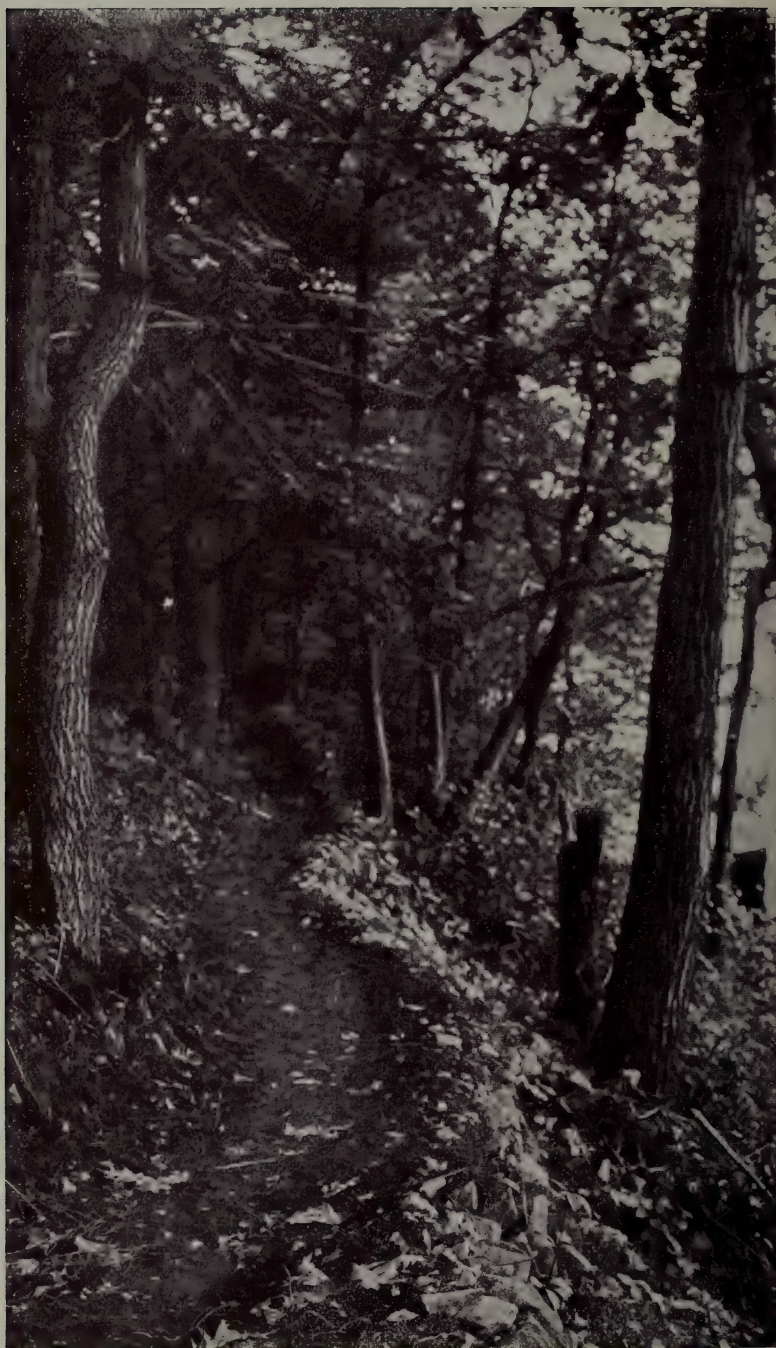
## ROADS OF THE PALISADES



**P**ALISADES roads are among the interesting features of the ridge. This is especially true of several old roads. One of the most picturesque of these zig-zags down the precipitous cliffs from the end of Palisade Avenue, Englewood Cliffs. There are few wilder mountain roads than this—known for many years as the old Englewood turnpike. It crosses and recrosses a stream which leaps in cascades to the river. On one side is a sheer wall of rock; the other overlooks an almost perpendicular declivity. At a point near the river the road forks, one branch extending southward to the old Englewood pier, the other, called Undercliff Avenue, running northward to Undercliff settlement. Another old road, now disused, winds down the cliffs at Huyler's Landing, while farther northward are the remains of the ancient road which led from Closter (now Alpine) Landing to the cliffs, and over which the British armies were transported. The present road at Alpine accomplishes the ascent by far easier grades. At Sneider's Landing the old Rockland Road led down to the river. Its course was to the north and down a much steeper hill than the present highway. An almost continuous trip by road along the top of the ridge can be made from Weehawken to Piermont. From Weehawken to



A Picturesque Old Highway of the Palisades.



Photograph by John P. Fritts.

This Cool, Shady Path Invites the Tired City Dweller to Rest and Reflection.

Hudson Heights, just below Cliffside, the magnificent Hudson County Boulevard follows the edge of the cliffs. From Cliffside to Fort Lee an excellent road runs some distance back of the crest. From Fort Lee to Alpine a macadam highway traverses the woodland a short distance from the cliff line, continuing from Alpine to Piermont, as an ordinary country road.

In Revolutionary times a military road was constructed between Sneden's Landing and Fort Lee, running for a few miles close to the cliffs. Traces of this road can yet be seen, especially along the northern portion of its course.



Summer and Winter Along the Old Englewood Turnpike.





Photograph by John P. Fritts.

Depth and Distance Are Typified in This View, from a Jutting Point Above Englewood Creek.

## HOW THE PALISADES WERE SAVED



**B**ELOW Fort Lee Point there is but little left of the wild beauty of former years. Here the hand of man has reached out and scarred and destroyed the picturesqueness of the cliffs. Huge factory chimneys rise against jagged quarries. Wretched Italian settlements are crowding out the old estates, and soon nothing of the old-time charms will remain. North of Fort Lee Bluff the ruthless dynamiter began to destroy the grandest portion of the ridge. The greater portion of old Indian Head was blown asunder to be metamorphosed into flats and skyscrapers in the neighboring city. The old trees were torn from their roots and the hacking and slashing threatened the entire ridge. Well might the old trees have exclaimed with Kipling as this work went on:

“Children we are of the great god Pan  
Who marvel much by the river;  
How ruthless man can mar the plan  
Of the wise and bounteous giver.

We hear afar the sounds of war  
As rocks they rend and shiver;  
They blast and mine and rudely scar  
The pleasant banks of the river.”

With increasing desecration of the cliffs public indignation grew stronger. Protests against the vandalism became more and more persistent. Various measures for halting the destruction were proposed. Every movement and every public body that joined in an effort to save the Palisades helped to pave the way for the actual accomplishment which has been achieved by the present Palisades Interstate Park Commission. The early attempts at preservation, the steps that led up to this efficient body, its organization, its methods and its future aims, all constitute a chapter in the history of scenic preservation of vital interest and significance.

The first tangible plan toward protecting the Palisades was a proposal to induce the National Government to secure them for military purposes. Supporters of this idea induced the state Legislatures of New Jersey and New York to pass bills

authorizing the appointment of a commission to confer "for the acquisition of the Palisades by the United States." This commission consisted of three members from each state. The New Jersey commissioners were Henry D. Winton, Edward P. Meany and Charles B. Thurston. The New York representatives were Enoch C. Bell, Waldo G. Morse and J. James R. Croes. Accordingly in 1895, under recommendation of the joint commissioners, legislation was introduced in each state ceding the face and water frontage of the ridge to the United States for a "military fortification and reservation." The respective measures were signed by Governor George T. Werts, of New Jersey, and Governor Levi P. Morton, of New York, and submitted to the House Committee on military affairs in the Fifty-fourth Congress. The Palisades were obviously of little value for military purposes and the proposal was not accepted. Resubmitted in the Fifty-fifth Congress it met with similar fate.

#### NEW JERSEY WOMEN TAKE A HAND.

The outlook for preservation following these failures was discouraging. There seemed to be no plan or hope for future action. At this juncture the women of New Jersey took up the work. With persistence and zeal the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs began an active campaign. The first fruits of this movement were realized in the passage of a bill in 1899 by the New Jersey State Legislature empowering the Governor to appoint a committee of five to "report upon the present condition of the Palisades and to suggest some remedy or remedies to prevent the



Palisades at Coytesville. Ruthless Quarrymen Were Gouging Away the Face of the Cliff When Stopped Through the Efforts of Patriotic Citizens.



Palisades from defacement and depredation." Governor Foster M. Voorhees signed the enactment and named as members of the commission Miss Elizabeth B. Vermilye, Cecilia Gaines Holland, Franklin W. Hopkins, William A. Linn and S. Wood McClave.

In New York state interest in halting the vandalism was keen. Among the prominent friends of the Palisades in New York were Andrew H. Green, "Father of Greater New York," President of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society and Governor Theodore Roosevelt. The New York Legislature passed a bill similar to that enacted in New Jersey and Governor Roosevelt appointed as the New York committee at the suggestion of Mr. Green, Frederick W. Devoe, Frederick S. Lamb, George F. Kunz, Abraham G. Mills and Edward Payson Cone.



Bare and Ghostly Trees Overlooking an Ice-Locked River.

Conferences covering nearly a year were held by both commissions. A definite solution of the Palisades problem was decided upon. The committees recommended in their report to the respective state Legislatures that the first important step should be the passage of acts "constituting a permanent Interstate Palisades Park Commission with power to acquire and hold for each state whatever territory was necessary along the Palisades for an interstate park and thereby preserve the scenery of the Palisades—the intention being to form a continuous park along the entire front of the Palisades from Fort Lee, N. J., to Piermont, N. Y." Five members were to be appointed from each state.

Legislation to this end was passed by the New York Legislature and approved by Governor Roosevelt March 22nd, 1900. A bill of similar purport was introduced in the New Jersey Legislature. It met with hostility. Within and without the Legislature influences were set in motion to kill the measure. Powerful opposition was exerted by the quarrying interests. A



This Charming Footpath Runs Practically the Whole Length of the Palisades Interstate Park.

portion of the press gave evidence of being subsidized. Legislators themselves worked for its defeat. The friends of the proposed enactment maintained an unrelenting fight, however, and finally by dint of tremendous effort and by yielding to unimportant compromise in certain points, they carried the day. The bill was passed and approved by Governor Foster M. Voorhees.

Thus was created the present Interstate Park Commission which has solved one by one the problems of saving the Palisades from destruction and converting them into a great pleasure ground of priceless value and transcending natural beauty. New Jersey's commissioners as appointed by Governor Voorhees were: Abram S. Hewitt, Edwin A. Stevens, Franklin W. Hopkins, William A. Linn and Abram De Ronde. New York's appointees were: George W. Perkins, J. DuPratt White, Ralph Trautmann, D. McNeely Stauffer and Nathan F. Barrett.

The wise judgment shown in these appointments has been demonstrated, not only by the efficiency of the members, but also by the notable fact that their personnel has remained unchanged for upwards of a decade except that the death of two commissioners, Abram S. Hewitt and Ralph Trautmann have given place to William B. Dana and William H. Porter.



Palisades Interstate Park Patrol Boat.

## WORK OF INTERSTATE PARK COMMISSION



WHEN the Commission of the Palisades Interstate Park began its labors it had on hand appropriations of \$5,000 from New Jersey and \$10,000 from New York. A complete and systematic survey of the territory under jurisdiction was at once instituted as a foundation for their future work.

New Jersey's entire appropriation was devoted to this undertaking. In the New Jersey frontage there were 147 parcels held by 112 different owners. The survey was attended by unusual difficulties. Nothing better illustrates the wilderness character of this region than the difficulty which was experienced in determining some of the property lines and the ownership of certain areas. There was much confusion in boundary lines and in some instances no transfer of titles had been made for generations. It was a work requiring a vast amount of patient investigation. In one instance, that of a parcel of an acre in size, it was necessary to send a deed conveying an undivided  $1/240$  interest twice to the state of Washington before the document was properly executed.

Once the commission's survey had been completed the vital work of preservation was taken up. At intervals along the Palisades quarrymen were cleaving huge masses from the cliffs. Probably the worst offender was a concern that was tearing an enormous gash in the rocks near Fort Lee Bluff. According to a statement published at that time 12,000 cubic yards of the Palisades were being blasted away each day at this quarry alone. To stop this and other blasting was the commission's task. It succeeded in securing an option on the property of this leading offender. The price asked for the property was \$132,500, and



\$10,000 was required to secure the option. The commissioners still had New York's \$10,000 appropriation, and they decided to use it in securing this option. The amount was paid in December, 1900, and on Christmas Eve of that year blasting was stopped at this quarry—a memorable event in the history of Palisades preservation.

The problem of raising the balance of \$122,500 necessary to secure ownership of the property was then faced. The prospect was not encouraging. Further state aid was out of the question for the time being. Public contributions formed the only other alternative. The commission set about this laborious process of raising the money. The commission's president, Mr. George W. Perkins, Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan's business partner, was one of the most energetic workers for funds. Mr. Perkins presented the needs of the commission to Mr. Morgan and Mr. Morgan responded by contributing the entire amount needed, \$122,500, thus enabling the commission to close title with the quarrymen. Other public men have contributed both money and property. Mr. Cleveland H. Dodge has given the commission 12 acres, while Mr. George W. Perkins only recently has donated \$12,000 towards the purchase of the remaining properties.

No tablet has been placed upon the Palisades recording Mr. Morgan's magnificent gift, bestowed at the most critical of all periods in Palisades preservation, or commemorating gifts which have been made by others, of both land and money, but Mr. Morgan and the other men who have come to the aid of this vast scenic enterprise could crave no grander monument to their munificence than the great cliffs, that will tower above the river unmarred, for generations after the lives of these donors are but distant memories.

#### COMMISSION IN FULL CONTROL.

From this auspicious beginning the commission progressed steadily, securing quarry after quarry, until all were in its con-



A Bit of Shore Line.

trol. State aid became more generous. In 1901 New Jersey appropriated \$50,000 for the purchase of land and New York \$400,000. By the end of 1903 at least 50% of the land had been acquired. The following table shows at a glance the yearly progress made by the commission in purchasing Palisades frontage:

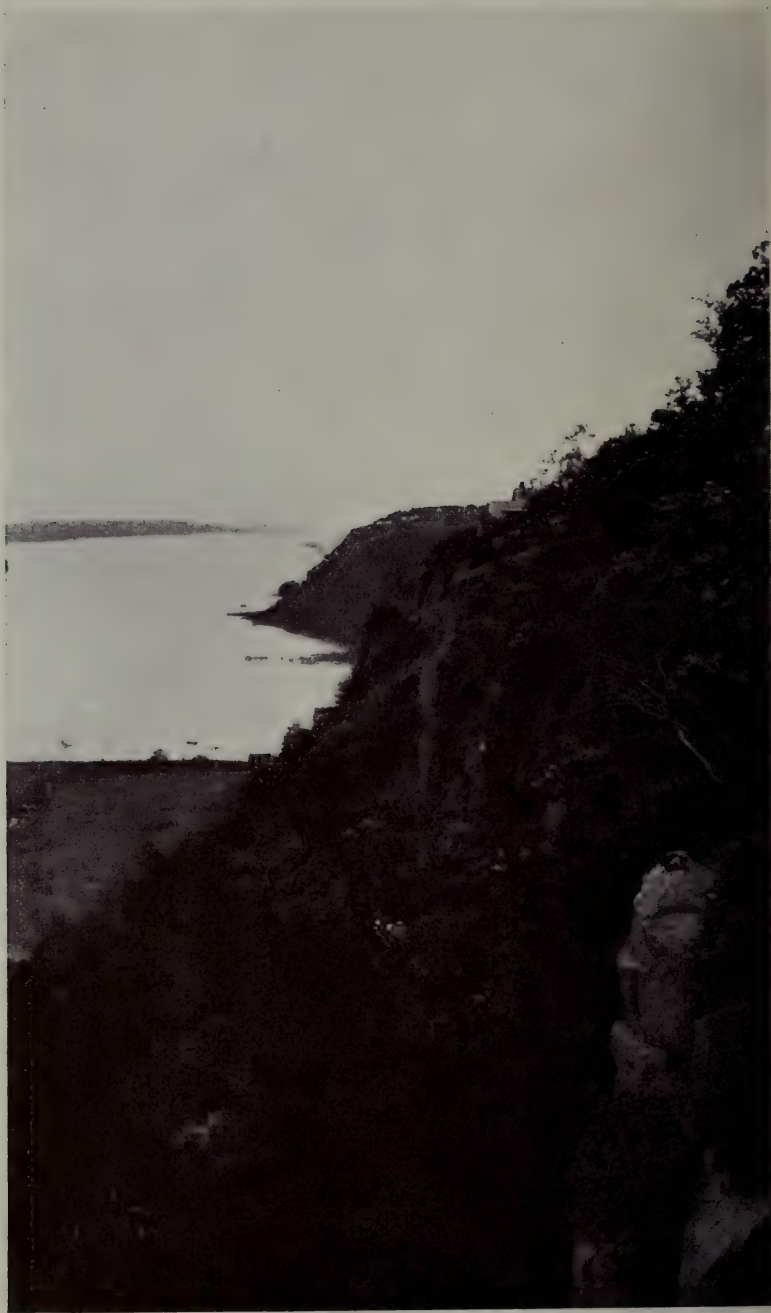
Year	Feet Frontage	Acres	Cost of Land and Improvements
1901	11,832	122	\$178,210.62
1902	10,214	131	63,750.98
1903	10,377	72	38,352.90
1904	9,500	112	46,489.80
1905	4,605	58	43,530.33
1906	2,010	25	41,250.00
1907	343	2(homesteads)	17,500.00
1908	1,740	29	4,047.30
1909	acquisition practically completed.		

The total cost of land, riparian rights and improvements up to June, 1909, has been \$543,000. It is doubtful whether any public work has been ever conducted with more economy and efficiency. With its personnel representing men of large interests having exacting demands upon their time the members of the commission have devoted their energies to its business for a period of eight years. They have served without financial recompense. It is a fact notable in the annals of public service that the commission's actual running expenses during these eight years have not exceeded 3 per cent. of the total amount expended in its undertakings. The territory under its jurisdiction, the probable cost of which had been freely estimated as high as \$2,000,000, has been secured for about one-quarter of this amount.

In fixing land values the commission divided the area into three sections. The first section, nearest New York City, was placed at \$500 per acre; the second at \$350 per acre and the third, farthest north, at \$200 per acre. The commission adhered to these prices in buying the land and virtually the whole jurisdiction was acquired under this schedule of prices.

#### A POLICY OF CONCILIATION.

The commission's policy has been one of tact and conciliation. It has gone about its work quietly and skilfully. It has avoided disputes and made friends of enemies. Its power of



Photograph by John P. Fritts.

Where Cliffs Struggle Upward to Meet the Sky. The Great City Is Outlined in the Distance on the Opposite Shore.



condemnation has been invoked in only a few instances. It has devoted nearly a decade to overcoming the innumerable difficulties connected with securing the property, but it has made sure and solid progress each year.

The commission's work has been conducted so quietly, the contributions of its members and friends made so unostentatiously that the general public has had no idea of the magnitude of its achievements. It is well, however, that the people of not only New Jersey and New York, but of the whole nation, should realize and appreciate the accomplishment of these earnest, self-sacrificing men. "Had these cliffs," said the *Evening Post*, "been left in the possession of private owners to be torn to pieces by blasts, divested of their covering of trees and lined by smoke-belching factories, this 'priceless possession'—the natural enhancement of our grandest river—would at no very distant period have been transformed into ragged stone heaps, offensive to the eye, with a value governed solely by the cubic foot price of trap rock." With preservation insured and the property under its control the commission will now concentrate its energies upon the care and development of facilities for making it more accessible.

#### A 700-ACRE NATURAL PARK.

The Palisades Interstate Park thus formed is one of the world's most remarkable territories set aside for natural preservation and public enjoyment. With its southern portion opposite New York City it has fourteen miles of rocky shore



A Typical Camp Colony Along the Palisades.

frontage and fourteen miles of towering crags and cliff-topped woodland. The park begins at Fort Lee Bluff and extends northward along the Hudson River to Piermont Creek. It includes the water rights, shore and face to the crest of the Palisades. Eleven and two hundredths miles, or 58,185 feet are in New Jersey; two and eighty-four hundredths miles, or 14,995 feet are in New York. Seven hundred acres are included within its area. No long or tiresome journey is necessary to reach this matchless recreation region. No admission fees are exacted. All classes are welcome and the wealthy and the humble are represented among its visitors.

In commemoration of the work for Palisades preservation accomplished by the Federation of Women's Clubs, of New Jersey, the commission has set aside a reservation upon a commanding bluff upon which a suitable monument will be erected with funds contributed by their friends.

Until a short time ago it was well-nigh impossible for a pedestrian to walk along the entire shore line of Palisades owing to the great masses of rocks here and there, and also because of the precipitous formations of the cliffs themselves, especially along the northern stretches. The commission has now completed a picturesque and continuous pathway along the shore. This path descends and scales the many gulches which notch the river bank. It twists between huge boulders and skirts precipices. It penetrates the shadows of the virgin forest and traverses the beach. Its diversity and wildness will reward the nature lover who enjoys a long and vigorous walk.

#### THE MECCA OF CAMPERS.

The love of out-door life and the appreciation of nature which are developing so rapidly into national traits have caused thousands of city dwellers, residents of both states, to seek the wilderness and beauty of the Palisades shore for camping purposes. During the summer months little villages of tents dot the river's edge. The popularity of the Palisades as a camping resort is



One of Several Public Springs in the Palisades Interstate Park.



Numerous Canoe Clubs Make Their Outing Headquarters in the Interstate Park.

shown by the rapid increase in the number of permits sought. Twenty-five were granted the first year, 221 the second year and 395 the third year. Nearly 4,000 campers availed themselves of the advantages of the park last year, over Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

The Palisades Park section is admirably situated for use as a military camping ground. The commission has recently granted permission to one company of the Seventy-first Regiment, N. G. N. Y. to erect its tents for a summer instruction camp. This illustrates but one of the many public uses to which the park area is being adapted.

The commission has entire jurisdiction over the park lands. Since 1905 it has maintained a corps of marshals and a police patrol boat during the summer months.

All campers are required to secure permits from the commission and the government of the tent colonies is placed to a certain extent directly in the hands of the campers themselves under an ingenious and successful code of regulations. It is a notable fact that it has not been necessary to make a single arrest among any of these campers. The commission guards carefully from contamination the many springs whose waters gush from the rocks, an illustration of this watchfulness being shown in the accompanying pictures.



## PERSONNEL OF THE COMMISSION.

The present personnel of the Commission of the Palisades Interstate Park of New York are: George W. Perkins, President, Riverdale, New York City; Franklin W. Hopkins, Vice-President, Alpine, N. J.; J. Du Pratt White, Secretary, Nyack, N. Y.; D. McNeely Stauffer, Treasurer, Yonkers, N. Y.; Edwin A. Stevens, Hoboken, N. J.; Nathan F. Barrett, New Rochelle, N. Y.; William A. Linn, Hackensack, N. J.; Abram De Ronde, Englewood, N. J.; William B. Dana, Englewood Cliffs, N. J.; William H. Porter, New York City.

The New Jersey commission is composed of the same ten members, and the officers of that commission are: Edwin A. Stevens, President; D. McNeely Stauffer, Vice-President; J. Du Pratt White, Secretary, and Abram De Ronde, Treasurer.

The commission maintains an office at No. 31 Nassau Street, Borough of Manhattan, New York City, in charge of its Assistant Secretary, Leonard Hull Smith, where its maps, records and reports are open to inspection. As will be seen, the two commissions are composed of the same ten members, five of whom are residents of New York, appointed by the Governor of that state, and five of whom are residents of New Jersey, appointed by the Governor of that state. Each Governor appoints his resident members and accepts the nominees of the other Governor. This custom of interstate appointment makes possible the scheme and intention of the statutes creating the Interstate Park, to establish one harmonious commission representing both states.



A Wild Fern Field on the Palisades, Near Fort Lee.

## A PRISTINE WILDERNESS



ALMOST without interruption from Fort Lee Bluff to its northern end at the Piermont Valley, the eastern side, and much of the northern end of the Palisades Interstate Park remains a pristine wilderness. Here within actual sight of the northward-pushing city on the opposite island, is a little world of almost virgin nature, many parts of which have never been trodden by the foot of man owing to their inaccessibility. Over the fourteen miles from the old dock at Fort Lee to the northern end of the rocks, there are hardly more than a score of human habitations, not counting the colony of campers whose tents dot the river shore line at frequent intervals during the summer months. Of the folk living in the few permanent houses nearly all are a quaint fishing people, and old residents.

### IN NATURE'S REALM.

At each season of the year the Palisades Interstate Park will reward the nature lover with some particular charm. In the dreamy summer's afternoons with the distant headlands fading gradually away in the blue haze, their lights and shadows are seen to greatest perfection. On a crisp winter's morning with every rocky pinnacle sparkling with frosty diamonds under the rays of the eastern sun, the towering cliffs present a spectacle of dazzling beauty. As each season brings a new mood, so each time of day changes the atmosphere of the scene. In the early summer's mornings the woods ring with many joyous bird voices and one is reminded of Bryant's lines in "A Scene on the Banks of the Hudson," written by the way, on the shore beneath the Palisades:

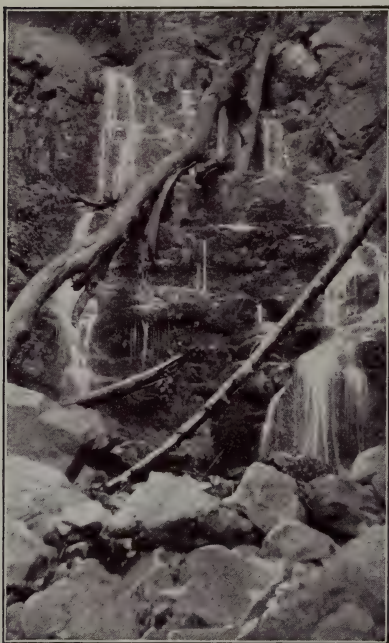
"Mid the dark rocks that watch his bed  
Glitters the mighty Hudson spread  
Unrippled, save by drops that fall  
From shrubs that fringe his mountain wall."

Twilight settles early under the tall rocks, enshrouding with mystery each glen and rocky retreat. Night, especially if it be a winter's night, with ghostly patches of snow resting

here and there in the niches of the dark crags, ice floes passing silently upon the tide below, and the only lights those twinkling from the opposite shore, presents a scene of unusual impressiveness.

Verdure, more or less dense, now climbs and clings to the rugged face of the Palisades from the river shore to varying heights toward the crest, in some cases even rising to the crest itself. Forming this vegetation, and in the midst of the stately forest that crowns the table-like top of the ridge are many varieties of trees. In May the dogwood and chestnut blossoms

dot the delicate emerald leaves with white, in June the tulip trees unfold their snowy flowers, and in autumn all the trees join in a symphony of splendor, the red and yellow maples, crimson sour gums, garnet sweet gums, bronze oaks and orange hickories, stretching in a broad band of color between the blue river and the fleecy clouds. A little north of Englewood Creek is the "evergreen section," in which spruce and pines predominate.



The Falls, Green's Brook, Near Alpine.

Between the trees that cleave to the battlements, and the flinty rocks themselves, nature is encouraging a grim battle. The precipice stands unrelenting, re-

pellling, defying, the trees rise, grasping, pushing, twisting and thrusting their tenuous roots into every crevice and ledge, ever mounting higher and higher toward the top, the gnarled oaks, sturdiest foemen of them all, gripping a foothold on the dizziest of the heights, and leading all the others upon the attack. So from year to year the warriors press upward covering more and more of the gray rocks with their ranks.

Growing among the rocks and trees are many varieties of wild flowers. Among the first of the spring blossoms are those



of the dainty wild violets, while later come the bluebells, wake-robins and the dandelions. With summer the Virginia creeper begins to twine lovingly about the tree trunks, the creeping wintergreen hides many boulders, the mountain laurel reaches maturity, mint perfumes the air, pitcher plants, primroses and "bright-eyed and bold" buttercups put on their gay attire. When the crisp October breezes rustle through the leaves the prim jacks in the pulpit put on their coats, the fringed gentians make a brave showing and the golden rod raises his "myriad glimmering plumes."

This wild vegetation is tenanted with throngs of birds at all seasons. Now and then a bald eagle or a fish hawk can be seen soaring gracefully over the highest cliffs. At night the wild call of the hoot owl is often heard upon some lofty bough. The voices of the bob-whites, bluebirds, blue jays, wrens and woodpeckers are familiar among the trees. These are all among the permanent residents but there are numerous migrants who are drawn to the loveliness of the park's retreats. In November come the white-winged gulls from the lower harbor, to remain until the warm spring sun tempts them seaward again. Among the other winter visitors are the ruby-crowned knight, the winter wren, the horning gull and the crow. Summer's charms entice hither the wood thrush, scarlet tanager, Baltimore oriole, hermit thrush and indigo bird, the mocking bird, yellow warbler, purple martin, sandpiper and other wanderers grave and gay. The ridge is the home of many foxes, their depredations upon hen roosts having caused the borough of Englewood Cliffs to offer a standing reward for their capture.

Among the most delightful attractions of the Palisades Interstate Park are the crystal streams that bubble from the flinty rocks, and the little cascades that here and there tumble down mossy ravines. One of the most beautiful of these streams is that known as Green's Brook, which falls over successive rocky terraces under the dense foliage just below Alpine, entirely hidden from the river so long as the leaves are on the trees.



Nature's Towering Battlements, About Opposite 185th Street, New York City.

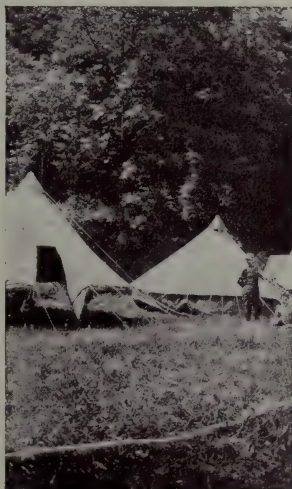
Photograph by John P. Fritts.

## THE HENRY HUDSON DRIVE



THE great development of the park lands towards which the commissioners of the Palisades Interstate Park are now working is the construction of a driveway along the park's rock-hewn shore. Complete surveys for this road were made in 1903 by Charles W. Leavitt, Jr., the eminent landscape engineer. Senator Edmund W. Wakelee, always a consistent friend and worker in the cause of the preservation of the Palisades, introduced a bill in the New Jersey Legislature in February, 1909, empowering the commission to construct a driveway. Senator Howard R. Bayne introduced a similar bill in the New York Legislature. The New Jersey bill passed but without an appropriation, thus merely declaring the state's policy in favor of a driveway. The New York bill did not pass. While the result of this year's legislation is disappointing, yet the friends of this plan to develop the park by constructing a magnificent interstate driveway, are confident that it is only a question of time before the states will realize the possibilities and needs of such a drive and appropriate the necessary funds to that end.

For most of its distance the proposed drive will be cut and filled from the Palisades rock itself. It will curve gracefully around the headlands and by easy grades it will dip or rise in order to avoid the monotony of conformity to the water level. At one point it will tunnel through solid rock two hundred feet above the river. When it reaches a point just south of Sneden's Landing the drive will rise easily and sweep westward through a depres-



A Glimpse of Military Camp Life  
at Interstate Park.



sion at that point, connecting with the highway leading northward to the magnificent State Road through the highlands. The plans provide for a boulevard similar in construction to the world-famous roads traversing the Swiss Alps and equaling any other in picturesque location and beauty of view.

Except for this magnificent driveway, and necessary water and land connections the commissioners will rigidly exclude artificialism from the park. Its wild growths, its picturesque beauty will not be interfered with. The commissioners belong to the school of Walpole and Kent. They believe that the underlying principle of landscape art in the Park shall be a faithful preservation of nature's handiwork exhibited in such marvelous diversity throughout the Palisades ridge.

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#### HOW TO REACH THE PALISADES INTERSTATE PARK

The Palisades Interstate Park may be reached by several approaches. From New York City access may be had by the ferries of the West Shore Railroad from the foot of Franklin or West Forty-second streets to Weehawken, New Jersey, there connecting with direct trolley to Coytesville, a few moment's walk from the crest of the Palisades. A more attractive route, however, is provided by the West 130th Street Ferry (reached by Subway to Manhattan Street or upper Broadway surface cars and 125th Street crosstown cars) to Edgewater, New Jersey, thence by trolley to Main Street, Fort Lee, a short distance from the cliffs, or by foot from the Edgewater ferry house northward along the River Road, one and one-quarter miles, to the Park's southern boundary, thence by path the entire length of the reservation. From the foot of Dyckman Street (Subway to Dyckman Street Station), a motor-boat ferry is operated during the summer months to the old Englewood pier. From Yonkers a steam ferry yacht plies to Alpine and from Dobbs Ferry a motor-boat ferry runs across the river to Sneden's Landing. From New Jersey the Park may be reached by several roads leading up the western slope, also by the wagon road traversing the backbone of the ridge.



*Reproduced from an Old Print, Now in Possession of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, After a Painting by W. G. Wall.*

## THE PALISADOES

**The following quaint description accompanies the picture reproduced above:**

The Palisadoes consist of a line of rugged and perpendicular bluffs, which at a few miles distance from the city of New York, margin for a considerable distance and overlook the bed of the Hudson river. To the eye of the traveller, rising in savage grandeur, and stretching their tree-crowned summits far as the vision can compass, these rocks are too prominent a feature in the scenery of the Hudson to be overlooked. The shore, throughout the whole extent of these bluffs, is abrupt, and the water sufficiently deep to allow vessels, even of considerable burthen, to approach within a short distance; and, when sailing close along the shore, the view of these steep and peculiar acclivities is peculiarly grand and imposing. Into every crevice of the rocks vegetation has insinuated itself, and wreaths of verdure seem to hang from every jutting point and projecting ledge. Oak, hickory, chestnut, butternut, and maple, are to be found among the trees which adorn the summit of the Palisadoes, and grow to a magnitude which would scarcely be credited by those who have no other opportunity of viewing them, except from the deck of a vessel. Considerable quantities of wood are annually cut from this abundant source, and being plunged down the precipice, are easily thrown into the vessels which lie close under the shore, and conveyed to a ready and profitable market.

The height of these bluffs is various, rising from 400 to 800 feet, exhibiting, in every interval of verdure, steep and solid masses of stupendous stone, and presenting here and there deep cavities, where the eagle builds his nest among the cliffs, secure from the reach of human enmity. From the quarries at the foot of these rocks, inexhaustible supplies of stone are transported to the city; and the scanty cottages and other buildings which are scattered along the shore, present a singular contrast to the stupendous edifices of nature, which overtop them, and seem to threaten them with continual destruction.

Ranging along the west bank of the Hudson, this singular line of precipice forms a striking contrast with the gradual, fertile, and cultivated scenery of the opposite shore. On the eastern margin of the river, the eye is gratified by the appearance of villas and seats, laid out with taste, and lifting themselves to the view, amidst a verdant and cultivated landscape; while on the west, the interval between the bluffs and the river is so narrow, as scarcely in any instance to admit of tillage, except indeed where the industry of the cottager has succeeded in extorting from the reluctant soil some pittance toward the supply of his daily wants.

The bold and rocky middleground of the picture is peculiarly characteristic of the scene, and the thinness and liquid transparency of the water along the shore are inimitable.

## The Palisades—An Appreciation

BY VAN DEARING PERRINE, "THE PAINTER OF THE PALISADES."

*In the minds of the unimaginative the Palisades will always suffer by comparison. They are of not nearly so great a height or bulk, neither are they composed of so great a variety of forms, as any number of places familiar to the tourist of today. Yet they have a character all their own—too subtle to be grasped by the idle beholder of an hour. Their beauty must be lived with before one may be elevated into a response to their loftiest spell. And then what a playground they really become for the imagination, and with what solemn fitness they frame the stars!*

*One may sit at night and watch the lights come out on the opposite shore, a tiny thread of gems. Plucking a leaf and holding its stem at arm's length would blot from the eye a point where exists a greater human activity than anywhere else upon our planet today. Yet what a mere moment has been the existence of this new world metropolis when compared with these time-scarred rocks. For countless ages storms have spent their fury cutting and grinding hieroglyphics there. But even as we contemplate their age our minds are drawn beyond their blackened rim to where bygone abysmal fires, on another night, dimly o'erflecked a duskier sky. Beyond that mask of smoky filament what suns unknown to us are lost!*

*We look again at the ledge and wonder that we should ever have thought it great or old. Others perhaps will come and will gaze upon these self-same rocks and stars, and though like ourselves they should never have an answer for humanity, may not the questioners have contributed richly, by the widening of their own sense, to the Mystery?*





Altitude and Location Map of the Palisades Region from Bergen Point to Piermont









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Mack, Arthur Carlyle  
The Palisades of the Hudson

